

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT: THE WAY AHEAD

CONSULTATION PAPER BY THE SCOTTISH OFFICE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper.

1.1 Over the last few years the issue of how schools and school education is managed has been the focus of considerable interest and attention. A number of new developments have made a positive impact on school management. Some have been as a result of legislation or advice from central government. Others have been introduced directly by education authorities as part of their responsibility for the provision of education in their areas. This paper proposes new arrangements for school management to consolidate and take forward these developments for Scotland as a whole.

The Government's policy.

1.2 The Government is firmly committed to the principle that decisions affecting individual schools should wherever possible be taken at school level. It also believes that parents and the local community should be involved in these decisions. A number of the major reforms in the education system over the last decade have been directed towards this end.

A number of reforms have paved the way for this.

1.3 The Government's recent legislation has increased local accountability.

* The principle has long been established in Scottish education that pupils should be educated as far as possible in accordance with the wishes of their parents. That principle is enshrined in the **Education (Scotland) Act 1980**. Section 28A of that Act gives parents a clear statutory right to choose the school they wish their child to attend. Over 200,000 placing requests have been made under these provisions and more than 90% of these have been successful.

* The **School Boards (Scotland) Act 1988** led to the creation of School Boards in the great majority of Scottish schools. By their very structure, Boards made it possible for the first time for parents, teachers and the wider local community to have a real say in the running of their schools.



* The **Self-Governing Schools Etc (Scotland) Act 1989** provides the opportunity for School Boards or for parents directly to seek to set up representative governing bodies to take on the running of their own school, independently of their education authority.

Local authorities also recognise the advantages of delegation.

1.4 Other developments have also fostered local accountability. Most education authorities accept the principle that school-level decision making is good managerial practice. A number have already taken steps to delegate financial and management responsibility for running schools from the centre to school level. The most extensive Scottish initiative has been Strathclyde Region's Delegated Management of Resources (DMR) which was introduced in 1990.

The time is now right to extend delegation throughout Scotland.

1.5 The Government welcomes the positive steps taken by a number of education authorities to delegate to schools. It believes the time is now right to extend delegation of school management to all primary, secondary and special schools on a consistent basis throughout Scotland. This could be achieved by developing the present legislative and administrative framework and the Government invites education authorities, School Boards and other interested parties to participate in general discussion of the way forward. At a later stage, it may be appropriate for the basis of school government to be set out in new legislative provisions. Headteachers and School Boards will have a vital part to play in the new arrangements.

What this paper contains.

1.6 Section 3 of this paper describes the Government's proposals. It recognises both the central role of the headteacher in the new arrangements and also the contribution School Boards can make. Section 4 explores a number of areas in which Boards could expand and develop their present activities in the light of these new arrangements and invites views.

List of those being consulted and the date by which comments are sought.

1.7 The paper is being sent to education authorities, School Boards and organisations with an interest in education. A full list is attached in the Annex. Responses will also be welcome from other organisations and individuals, particularly parents, who may wish to submit them. Further copies of the paper are available from the Scottish Office Education Department (SOED) at the address given in paragraph 5.1, to which views should be sent by 29 May 1992.

2. Background

The Government's policy for delegation to schools.

2.1 The Government wishes to ensure that decisions on education spending are taken at the point where their effects are felt - closer to the school, to parents and to pupils. It also wishes to ensure that the substantial sums invested in the education system are spent as effectively as possible. That is why the Government is now bringing forward proposals to extend delegation of school management throughout Scotland.

The benefits of delegation are widely acknowledged.

2.2 The movement towards increased local accountability has already produced benefits under a number of different systems. These include greater flexibility; the ability of each school to determine what its needs are and to act on these much more quickly; reduced bureaucracy; improved staff awareness of the whole school budget and management tasks; and savings in central administration costs at authority level for the benefit of direct expenditure on schools.

Experience of delegation in England and Wales.

2.3 In England and Wales, the move to local accountability is being achieved through the Local Management of Schools (LMS) programme introduced by the Department of Education and Science in line with the provisions of the Education Reform Act 1988. By 1 April 1992, all education authorities in England and Wales will be expected to have introduced LMS schemes in their areas. Many schools on the LMS scheme have reported that the scheme has led to substantial increases in the resources now available to them for books and equipment.

The role of headteachers has changed. They now have more duties and more responsibilities and they need the tools to carry out their job properly.

2.4 The role of headteachers, whatever the formal structure, has changed in a number of respects over the last few years. Headteachers are being asked to demonstrate a range of new management skills; and training programmes, such as the SOED's management training programme for headteachers, have been geared to fostering these skills. The development by the SOED of performance indicators (such as Relative Ratings and National Comparison Factors) is giving headteachers new tools with which to judge the effectiveness of their schools. This is also linked to the use of School Development Plans.

Headteachers must be able to call on support, including support from the School Board.

2.5 Headteachers are increasingly being equipped to exert real control on the running of their own schools. As promised in the Parents' Charter, new information about the comparative performance of schools will also soon be available to parents. A consequence of these developments is that headteachers will become more visibly accountable for the achievements of their school. But headteachers cannot be expected to do everything on their own. They will require continuing support from their own staff. They will also require support from their education authority, from parents and from the local community. School Boards, whose membership is drawn from staff, parents and the local community, are the forum for drawing together that support.

The role of School Boards.

2.6 School Boards have become well established since they were first created in 1989. Around three quarters of Scottish schools have Boards. Initially, the Government intended that Boards should only be formed in larger schools (those with over 100 pupils) but, following representations, decided that all schools should be allowed to form Boards.

The role of School Boards within the school.

2.7 Many Boards have focused on the physical condition of their school, on the capitation allowance and on other issues linked to pupils' safety. A recent survey carried out on behalf of the SOED indicated that around half the Board members surveyed thought that their work had had a beneficial impact on their school.

There is already a way in which powers may be delegated to Boards.

2.8 Under section 15 of the School Boards (Scotland) Act 1988, executive functions in relation to the school may be delegated to School Boards, either on the initiative of Boards themselves or on the initiative of education authorities. Where Boards felt able to take on new powers, this would mean more decisions being taken at school level in appropriate cases. Formal delegation along these lines could also form part of the delegation of decision-making to school level proposed in the following sections in this paper.

3. Devolved Management to Schools

The Government's proposals:

3.1 The Government proposes that new arrangements should be introduced to speed the pace of delegation. These could have the following characteristics:

budgets delegated to headteachers

- * education authorities to delegate control of school budgets to headteachers who should consult and take into account the views of School Boards. Formal arrangements along these lines, which would require primary legislation, might echo the present division of responsibility for the capitation allowance between headteachers and School Boards.

bursars to provide support

- * bursars to be appointed to support individual schools, or groups of schools, on financial and management matters. The bursar would have an important role in the new arrangements and would therefore be expected to be appropriately qualified or trained.

what budgets will cover

- * delegated budgets to cover most recurrent costs, including school staffing costs, property costs (including an allowance for repair and maintenance), supplies and services supplied at school level and school administration costs. At least 85% of the total expenditure within each authority on recurrent education costs at school level to be delegated in this way (control of capital costs, however, would not be delegated);

headteachers to be responsible for staff appointments

- * headteachers, with the involvement of School Boards as appropriate, to be directly responsible for all staff appointments (both teaching and non-teaching staff) for their school. At present, depute and assistant headteachers are appointed following recommendations by an appointments committee chaired by the headteacher with major representation from the School Board. That system could be extended for senior staff appointments below assistant headteacher level. Alternatively, responsibility for appointments below assistant headteacher level could be delegated on an administrative basis to headteachers by the education authority, with Boards being consulted as appropriate.

**education
authorities to bring
forward detailed
arrangements**

* education authorities to bring forward detailed arrangements for delegation for their areas, including the extent of the respective functions of headteachers and School Boards.

**The role of education
authorities**

3.2 Authorities, who have the statutory responsibility, will continue to provide general support and advice to schools. They will also remain directly responsible for strategic decisions on the general provision of schools and school buildings and for other aspects of education provision which are sensibly provided at an education authority level, such as school transport, bursaries, recruitment advertising and in-service teacher training. They would also be responsible for the allocation of delegated budgets to schools. It might be necessary in due course to make clear in new primary legislation the responsibilities and functions which would remain with authorities and those which would be delegated to school level, and also those which might be shared between the education authority and the school.

**The role of School
Boards.**

3.3 School Boards can play an important part in the success of these proposed new arrangements. They have much to offer headteachers in the way of support, advice, expertise, contact with parents and contact with the local community. It would be for individual education authorities, headteachers and School Boards to determine how best to work together for the benefit of their school, with formal delegation of functions to Boards under section 15 of the School Boards (Scotland) Act as appropriate.

**Determination of
detailed schemes of
delegation.**

3.4 A scheme of delegation of functions will involve a number of formal statutory and administrative strands. A number of authorities are already developing their own systems of delegated management and these could form an important element in the new arrangements. The issue of determination of budgets for functions which are formally delegated to School Boards will also have to be addressed. At present, section 17(1) of the School Boards (Scotland) Act 1988 simply requires education authorities to determine allocations of money to School Boards for carrying out their delegated functions. It is clearly desirable that consistency in this area should be achieved if possible.

Authorities to put forward proposals.

3.5 The Secretary of State therefore proposes that education authorities should put forward proposals for the allocation of budgets in their areas on the basis of arrangements in which the numbers of pupils at each school would be expected to be central. Authorities might wish to set out principles for the delegation of budgets according to a standard global formula or to propose such variations as they may deem necessary to take account of differences between areas or for other reasons.

What will happen after the consultation.

3.6 In the light of responses to this paper, the Secretary of State envisages that the Department would seek proposals from authorities for the systematic introduction of the new arrangements in their areas, including formulae for delegating budgets, in accordance with guidelines to be issued by the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State, will also consider whether, and how, consistency across the whole of Scotland might best be achieved and whether this should rest on guidelines or should be supported by new primary legislation.

Timetable

3.7 It should be possible for the new arrangements to become fully operational, following any necessary legislation, by the start of 1995-96. This would allow authorities to introduce schools in their areas into the new framework in a phased way. It would also allow authorities time to set up control and monitoring systems for their areas, building on expertise already gained within certain authorities and, possibly, to pool that expertise and experience.

Summary

3.8 The Department seeks views on:

- * the appropriate principles on the basis of which budgets might be determined in each authority's area; and
- * the practicability of introducing the new arrangements starting in selected schools and to be completed by the start of session 1995-96.

4. Further measures to help the development of School Boards

Other proposals to help School Boards.

4.1 School Boards could play an important part in helping headteachers under the proposed new arrangements. For this, they may require additional support and guidance. They can already seek this from their headteacher, their education authority or from the SOED's School Boards Support Unit. The Department has received a number of suggestions from Boards on ways in which to help them. This paper is not intended to focus on the operation of School Boards but there are a number of areas which would merit special attention if Boards are to play the fullest possible role in the new arrangements proposed in this paper.

Control over Boards' administrative and training budgets.

4.2 Some Boards have claimed that their freedom to act in general and for the benefit of their school in particular is being undermined by their lack of control over their own budgets. At present, the arrangements for the establishment and distribution of budgets vary widely between education authorities. Some Boards have also expressed a wish for any surplus money at the end of the financial year in their administrative and training budgets to be made available for other school purposes (such as books or equipment for their school). The Department has recently issued a circular to education authorities and to School Boards encouraging maximum flexibility on both sides in the management of Boards' administrative and training budgets.

Should School Board budgets be more clearly defined?

4.3 One way of addressing concerns over School Board budgets would be to consider whether clearer definition of what School Board administrative budgets should cover (and how they should be made available to Boards) should be introduced, either in primary legislation or in guidance. **Views are therefore sought on whether such clarification might be helpful and, if so, how it might best be achieved. One way might be through standard arrangements relating Boards' budgets to the size of the school, the size of the Board or some standard combination of the two.**

**Contacts between
Boards, school staff and
the local community.**

4.4 The membership of School Boards reflects the importance of developing good partnership between parents, teachers and other school staff, and the local community (represented by co-opted members on the Board). It follows that in discharging their functions, Boards should wherever possible seek the views of all school staff and the local community. And in seeking the views of school staff, Boards should seek to make contact both with teacher unions and other professional associations representing school staff. Such consultation should be a matter for the whole Board and not just the staff or co-opted member or members. The Department recognises that contact with the local community may not always be straightforward and the means of involving community interests may vary with the circumstances of individual Boards. **Views are sought on what practical guidance may be offered to help Boards to establish these contacts and consultation procedures.**

**Correspondence between
School Boards and
education authorities.**

4.5 Whether or not the role of Boards in assisting the headteachers in their work is to become more important, the Government wishes to make clear that, where a School Board Chairman writes formally to an education authority, he or she should expect to receive a personal reply from a senior member of the Education Directorate. A number of Boards have indicated that they feel that their views are not always taken fully into account by education authorities .

5. Conclusion

Where to send views.

5.1 Views on the issues raised by this consultation paper, or on any other aspect of the future development of School Boards, should be sent by 29 May 1992 to:

Mrs M Marriott
The Scottish Office Education Department
Room 4/10
New St Andrew's House
EDINBURGH
EH1 3SY
Tel: 031-244 4502

The way forward.

5.2 In the light of views expressed, Ministers will consider how best the new delegation arrangements should be introduced and the need for primary legislation. They will also consider what further guidance may be issued to school Boards.

Publication of views unless confidentiality is sought.

5.3 In order to help inform debate on the questions covered by this paper, the Department intends to follow its normal practice of making available to the public, on request, copies of the responses received. The Department will assume, therefore, that responses can be made publicly available in this way. If respondents indicate that they wish all, or part, of their reply excluded from this arrangement, its **confidentiality will be strictly respected.**

The Scottish Office Education Department
March 1992

List of organisations to whom this paper is being sent

School Boards
 Regional and Island Councils
 Association of Directors of Education
 Association of Educational Advisers
 Association of Headteachers (Scotland)
 Association of Primary Teachers (Scotland)
 Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists
 British Psychological Society
 Catholic Headteachers Association of Scotland
 Catholic Education Commission
 Christian Education Movement in Scotland
 Church of Scotland, Department of Education
 CBI
 CIPFA
 Commissioner for Local Authority Accounts in Scotland
 COSLA
 Colleges of Education
 Disability Scotland
 Department of Education and Science
 Educational Institute of Scotland
 Episcopal Church Education Committee
 EURYDICE
 Forum on Education
 Free Church of Scotland, Education Committee
 General Teaching Council
 Headteachers Association of Scotland
 Islamic Centre, Glasgow Central Mosque
 Jordanhill School
 Lothian Federation of Parent Teacher Associations
 National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers
 National Association of Inspectors and Educational Advisers
 National Association for Special Educational Needs
 Professional Association of Teachers (Scotland)
 Royal National Institute for the Deaf
 Royal National Institute for the Blind
 Secretary, Headmasters' Conference
 Scottish Association for the Deaf
 Scottish Child and Family Alliance
 Scottish Consumer Council
 Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum
 Scottish Council for Educational Technology
 Scottish Council for Research in Education
 Scottish Examination Board
 Scottish Law Commission
 Scottish Parent Teacher Council
 Scottish Secondary Teachers Association



Scottish Society for the Mentally Handicapped
Scottish Vocational Educational Council
SENSE, Scotland
Society of Local Authority Chief Executives
Strathclyde School Parents Association
STUC
Welsh Office